(b) if so, what are the details in this regard; and

(c) to what extent it will help the banks to create an in-house market and attract the consumers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (DR. DEBI PROSAD PAL): (a) to (c) Banks have now been permitted to undertake para banking services, such as, equipment leasing, housing finance, factoring, mutual fund business and merchant banking etc. These specialised services are to be handled either departmentally or through subsidiaries. it is expected that the diversification will help the banks to provide efficient services and improve their financial performance.

Heroin Seized at IGIA

196. SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that recently an old woman was nabbed by the Customs Officers at the Indira Gandhi International Airport at Delhi while carrying in her possession high grade heroin of 11 kilogram worth Rs. 12 crores;

(b) if so, the steps taken to stregthen vigil at the airport;

(c) whether Government contemplate rewarding the officials involved in the seizure; and

(d) if not, the reasons for the same?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (SHRI M.V. CHANDRASHEKHAR MURTHY): (a) Yes Sir, Customs Officer at I.G.I. Airport New Delhi on 23/24.9.95 recovered 10.976 kgs. of heroin from Ms. RHIZ GENRRERO DOLOREN, a Spanish National who was arrested and remanded to judicial Custody.

(b) Anti Smuggling agencies under Ministry of Finance are alert to detect and prevent smuggling including attempt to smuggle narcotics from International airports in the country. Narcotics Intelligence Cell for employing sophisticated techniques like Passenger profiling for detection of drug traffickers at Indira Gandhi International Airport, New Delhi has been formed. Close coordination is being maintained amongst all agencies concerned for detection and prevention of smuggling.

(c) and (d) Yes, the officers are being suitably rewarded.

Independent Regulatory Body for Insurance Sector

197. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of FINANCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the PHD chamber of Commerce and Industry has urged creation of an independent regulatory body for insurance sector on the lines of SEBI;

(b) if so, whether several foreign insurance companies are eagerly awaiting their entrance in the country; and

(c) if so, the reaction of Government on such views expressed by PHDCCI in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FINANCE (DR. DEBI PROSAD PAL): (a) to (c) The Finance Minister in his Budget Speech of 1995-96 had announced the intention of the Government to set up an Insurance Regulatory Authority in the country as a first step towards reforms in the insurance sector. The PHD Chambers of Commerce & Industry in their meeting held on 8th November, 1995 welcomed the proposal. From time to time, foreign